



1998–99 CATS ASSESSMENT

Open-Response Item Scoring Worksheet

Grade 8—Vocational Studies

The **academic expectations** addressed by the open-response item “Small Business” are

2.37 Students demonstrate skills and work habits that lead to success in future schooling and work.

2.36 Students use strategies for choosing and preparing for a career.

The **core content** assessed by this item includes

- Employers look for employees who have positive work habits and a good work ethic.
- A career path should match not only what a person likes and does well but also projected career goals.

Small Business

You want to start a small business (for example, lawn care or baby-sitting) to earn some extra money.

- a. Describe a business that you could start and explain how it matches your personal strengths.
- b. Describe **three** strategies you could use to convince others that you are the person to hire.



SCORING GUIDE

Grade 8 Vocational Studies

Score	Description
4	Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 2 or 3 personal strengths that are clearly linked to the business. Describes 3 effective strategies that would convince others to hire him/her. All 3 strategies are clear and include some development.
3	<p>Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 2 or 3 personal strengths that are linked to the business. Lists or describes 3 strategies that might convince others to hire him/her. Response lacks some development.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 2 or 3 personal strengths that are linked to the business. Describes 2 strategies that might convince others to hire him/her. Both strategies are clear and include some development.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 1 personal strength that is linked to the business. Describes 3 strategies that might convince others to hire him/her. All 3 strategies are clear and include some development.</p>
2	<p>Student responds fully to either Part a or Part b, without addressing the other part of the question.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 2 personal strengths. Lists or describes 1 or 2 strategies that might convince others to hire him/her. Response may lack some development (especially if 2 strengths and 2 strategies are provided).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 1 personal strength. Describes 2 or 3 strategies that might convince others to hire him/her. Response may lack some development (especially if 1 strength and 3 strategies are provided).</p>
1	<p>Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 1 personal strength or 1 strategy that might convince others to hire him/her.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Student identifies a reasonable business* and provides 1 personal strength. Describes 1 strategy that might convince others to hire him/her.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Student attempts to respond to one or both parts of the item. May identify a business that is unrealistic for a teenager to accomplish. May identify methods of convincing others that are inappropriate.</p>
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response.

* reasonable business = a business a teen could actually start (doesn't require advanced training/education)



SCORING GUIDE

Grade 8 Vocational Studies

Some examples of **REASONABLE** businesses:

- baby-sitting
- lawn care
- tutoring
- selling vegetables
- taking photographs
- teaching tennis (or another sport)

Some examples of **UNREASONABLE** businesses:

- occupations that require advanced training (e.g., vet, doctor, pilot)

Some examples of **personal strengths**:

- experience, knowledge, skill
- aptitude
- interests, likes
- special training (e.g., classes in first-aid/CPR)
- specific personal qualities (e.g., patience, caring, determination, trustworthiness)

Some examples of **APPROPRIATE** strategies to convince others:

- Create and post a flier that describes the services and emphasizes quality work and good references
- Knock on doors, introduce self, and describe services
- Take out an ad in the local newspaper describing the services and personal attributes
- Call the local newspaper and ask if they want to do a story on a teen-owned business (free publicity)
- Depending on business, go to a public place and display “wares”
- Provide discounts
- Show references to potential clients
- Ask good questions to show understanding and interest
- Do a “trial run” (e.g., take care of children while parents are in the house to show them how well you care for children)
- Tell others about your strengths; explain your knowledge/skills/experience

Some examples of **INAPPROPRIATE** strategies to convince others (e.g., not related to convincing others, questionable business practices):

- Get a friend to help run/manage the business
- Give away services for free (with no indication that this is a limited offer)



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 8 Vocational Studies

Sample 4-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

During the summer, I often decide to start a small business which has to do with my strengths. It helps me get some extra money. The small business I plan to start is baby-sitting. Baby-sitting is a very good occupation for me over the summer because it matches my personal interests and strengths.

For example, I have three younger siblings whom I baby-sit all the time. I have also had countless experience sitting for friends' and church members' children. Baby-sitting would also be very good for me because I enjoy children of all ages and know how to relate to a child personally and deal with their age group.

One way to get people to hire me would be to advertise on fliers about my experience and classes in first aid and CPR. This would help allow people to see me as an option because the fliers prove I can be trusted.

Another way to help get myself hired would be to offer a list of references and a past record of the people and kids I have taken care of. That way the new employers could call or get in touch with my other clients and ask them if, in fact, they and their children were satisfied with me.

The last way that I would get new people to hire me would be to offer to come to their house for maybe a half hour and just play with and get to know the kids while they are still there. That way the parents, themselves, could decide whether I would be good or not.

← Student identifies a reasonable business (i.e., baby-sitting).

← Student provides three personal strengths that are linked to the business (i.e., has baby-sitting experience, enjoys children, knows how to relate to and deal with children).

← Student describes a strategy for convincing others to hire him/her (i.e., using fliers to advertise experience and first aid/CPR training). The description is clear and includes some development.

← Student describes a second strategy for convincing others to hire him/her (i.e., offering a list of references). The description is clear and includes some development.

← Student describes a third strategy for convincing others to hire him/her (i.e., playing with children while the parents are present). The description is clear and includes some development.

Overall, the student demonstrates an ability to select a job that is matched to his or her personal strengths. In addition, the student shows a solid understanding of strategies that would be effective for convincing an employer to hire him or her. The development provided shows that the student understands why the strategies would be effective.



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 8 Vocational Studies

Sample 4-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

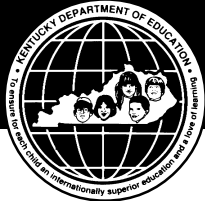
A. A small business that I would start would be a lawn care service. To my customers, I'd offer to mow their lawn and trim along the house, driveway, sidewalk, etc. Also, I would spray herbicides to kill weeds and pesticides to kill insects. I would garden, too, and/or plant flowers and bushes (if there is no garden). This business matches my personal strengths because it is an outdoors activity, and I love and work better outdoors. Since lawn care can take quite a bit of effort, I would be a good person for the task, because I would work to the best of my ability to get the job done correctly. Also, because lawn care takes hard work, I could do the job well with my experience of working on my parents yard and our lot of 2 acres located in the country. I have an imagination too, so I would have the ability to arrange flowers nicely if the customers didn't have a preference for where I planted the flowers.

B. One strategy I'd use would be to approach houses of potential customers and offer to care for the lawn for free the first time I worked for them. This would hopefully show the people who might hire me how well my business does for their lawns. A second strategy would be posting fliers in public places and conversing with people out in public to get to know them and casually mention my business to hopefully get the ideas stuck in their subconscious, kind of like product placement. A final strategy I'd use would be to advertise my service and express my strengths. I would also offer a deal where I'd collect the payment after the job is done, so the customers could not pay me if they weren't satisfied this time like they were before. I just might make a nice profit if I can get my name out there!

← Student describes a reasonable business (i.e., lawn care service) and provides multiple personal strengths that are linked to the business (i.e., loves to work outdoors, works to the best of his/her ability to get jobs done correctly, has lawn care experience, has a good imagination).

← Student describes three strategies for convincing others to hire him/her (i.e., offering free service the first time, posting fliers in public places and conversing with people out in public, collecting payment after the job is done to guarantee satisfaction). All three strategies are clear and include some development.

Overall, the student demonstrates an ability to select a job that is matched to his or her personal strengths. In addition, the student shows a solid understanding of strategies that would be effective for convincing an employer to hire him or her. The development provided shows that the student understands why the strategies would be effective.



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 8 Vocational Studies

Sample 3-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

A) I am starting a small baby-sitting business. I am very good with children and don't ignore their wants and needs. I have a certificate for first-aid, and have a first hand ability of taking care of asthma, plus I am trustworthy.

B) One strategy I could use to convince them that I am the person to hire is give them a free trial. I could baby-sit the first time free in order to show them that I am trustworthy. I could also give them some of my employees' numbers for recommendation purposes. Another thing I could do is put ads in the newspaper.

← Student identifies a reasonable business (i.e., baby-sitting) and provides three personal strengths that are linked to the business (i.e., is good with children, has a certificate in first aid/can take care of asthma, and is trustworthy).

← Student gives three strategies for convincing others to hire him/her (i.e., giving a free trial, giving employers' phone numbers for recommendations, and putting ads in the newspaper). All three strategies are clear, but the second and third strategies lack some development.

Overall, the student demonstrates an ability to select a job that is matched to his or her personal strengths. In addition, the student shows satisfactory knowledge of strategies that could be used to convince an employer to hire him or her. The response lacks the development needed to achieve a score of 4.

Sample 2-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

a) I would start a tennis instruction class because I am good at it.

b) I would show them my trophies, like amateur open tennis champion, and my ranking in the youth tennis league or Kentucky. I would guarantee personal instruction to each individual.

← Student identifies a reasonable business (i.e., tennis instruction class) and provides one personal strength that is related to the business (i.e., is good at tennis).

← Student lists two strategies for convincing others to hire him/her (i.e., showing trophies/ranking and guaranteeing personal instruction to each individual). The strategies are clear, but lack development.

Overall, the student demonstrates some ability to select a job that is matched to his or her personal strengths and some knowledge of strategies that could be used to convince an employer to hire him or her, although important details are lacking.



ANNOTATED STUDENT RESPONSE

Grade 8 Vocational Studies

Sample 1-Point Response of Student Work

Student Response

I could start a lawn mowing business. It could fit my personality because its an outside job. A strategy I would use is going to people I know for work.

Student identifies a reasonable business (i.e., lawn mowing) and attempts to link the business to a personal strength. Student lists one strategy for convincing others to hire him/her (i.e., going to people I know for work). The strategy lacks development.

Overall, the student demonstrates minimal ability to select a job that is matched to his or her personal strengths and minimal knowledge of strategies that could be used to convince an employer to hire him or her.



INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Grade 8 Vocational Studies

The open-response item “**Small Business**” assesses 1) students’ understanding of the relationship between personal strengths (e.g., strong interests, aptitudes, abilities, positive work habits) and appropriate job choices and 2) students’ knowledge of strategies that would be effective for convincing potential employers to hire them. The instructional strategies below present ideas for helping students explore and master this knowledge.

Discuss the relationship between personal strengths (e.g., interests, aptitudes, abilities, work habits) and the selection of appropriate jobs and careers. Describe the benefits of matching personal strengths and job/career choices.

Describe work habits that are important to employers. Discuss how a person’s work habits can be used as selling points when applying for a job or marketing one’s products or services.

Discuss basic strategies that a person can use to help convince a potential employer to hire him or her, for example:

- Preparing/sending a resume
- Offering references and/or letters of recommendation
- Offering specific examples of accomplishments
- Providing physical evidence of the quality of one’s work (e.g., actual work samples, photographs or videotapes of work products or services)

Invite speakers from a variety of career fields to describe their jobs/careers and to discuss how their personal strengths are matched to their work. Include speakers of all ages from both entry-level and advanced positions. Ask the speakers to share examples of creative strategies they used to convince their employers to hire them.

Have students work individually, in pairs, in small groups and/or as a class to complete any or all of the following activities:

- Complete and discuss interest, aptitude, and/or skill inventories. Have students use the results of their inventories to identify jobs that might be appropriate for them now, as well as careers that might be appropriate for them in the future.
- Create résumés. Students could help each other evaluate and improve their résumés.
- Develop lists of references. Students can help each other brainstorm different types of people to include on their reference sheets (e.g., teachers, coaches, employers).
- Collect evidence of skills and abilities that could be integrated into a portfolio to show potential employers.
- Role play a job interview in which personal strengths are discussed.